MARVEL
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THE TRANSFORMERS™
and
ACTION FORCE
MOMENTS LATER, THE
AUTOBOT HEADMASTERS
BEGIN THEIR DESCENT
TO EARTH
SET THE
TRAJECTORY
ORBIT, PL
OUR CONCERN
IS THE
DISTRESS CALL
HEADMASTERS...
ON EARTH!

Stan Lee presents
THE TRANSFORMERS
TRIAL by FIRE!
SOMEWHERE AMID THE TRACKLESS CORRIDORS OF INTERSTELLAR SPACE...
WE'RE ALMOST READY TO INITIATE THE FINAL ASSEMBLY STAGE, GALEN!
AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON, BRAINSTORM. WE'RE NEARING OUR DESTINATION...AND FORTRESS MAXIMUS MUST BE READY WHEN WE GET THERE!

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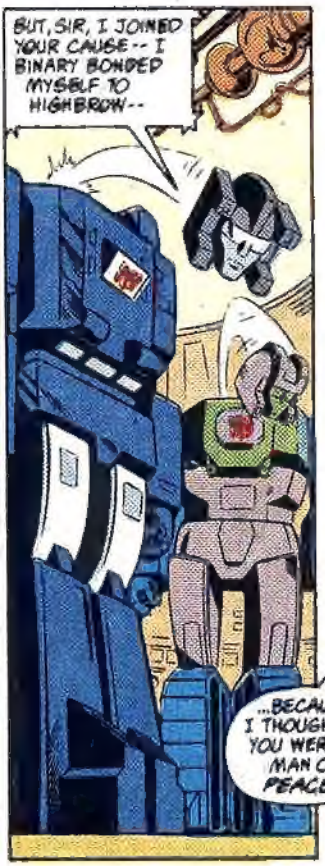
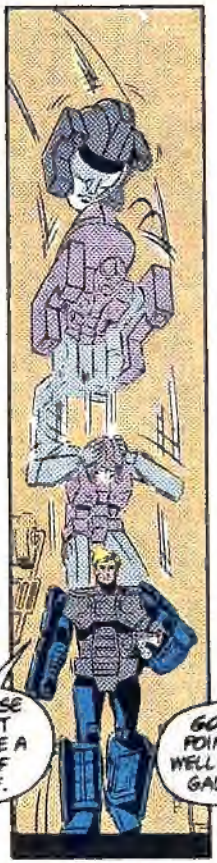
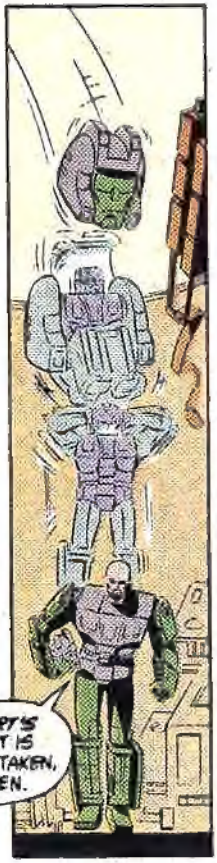
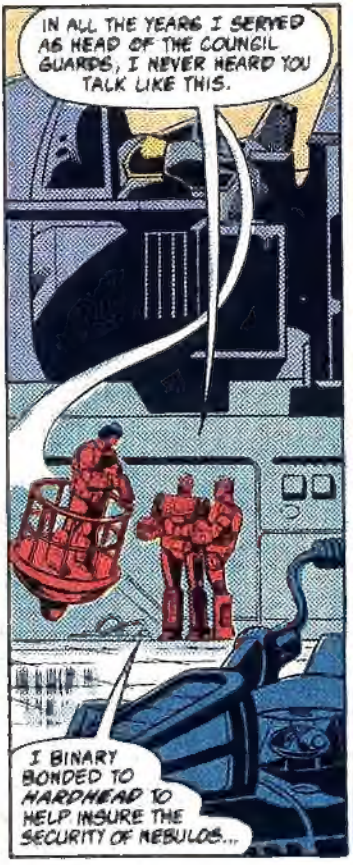
HE'LL BE READY, ALL RIGHT...
...BUT IT'S WHAT HE'S GETTING READY FOR THAT BOTHERS ME -- WAR!
YOU KNOW WHY I CHOSE THIS COURSE OF ACTION, HIGHBROW--
--I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE! I DID NOT INVITE THE AUTOBOTS OF CYBERTRON TO COME TO MY HOME WORLD OF NEBULOS IN SEARCH OF PEACE.
BUT THEY DID...
AND AS LEADER OF MY PEOPLE AND A FELLOW PEACE-LOVING BEING, I FELT OBLIGED TO WELCOME THEM.
"UNFORTUNATELY, OTHER NEBULANS--LED BY LORD ZARAK--VIEWED THE AUTOBOTS AS A THREAT AND TEAMED UP WITH THEIR ENEMIES, THE DECEPTICONS, TO COUNTER THEM.
"WAR SOON BROKE OUT AND SPREAD OVER NEBULOS. MY SUPPORTERS AND I WERE PITTED AGAINST ZARAK AND HIS.
"MANY ON BOTH SIDES WERE BIOMECHANICALLY ENGINEERED--BINARY BONDED--TO COMBINE WITH THEIR ROBOT PARTNERS AND ENHANCE THEIR FIGHTING ABILITIES.
"BUT SOON ZARAK AND I REALIZED THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE OUR WORLD WAS TO LEAVE IT AND TAKE OUR CONFLICT ELSEWHERE.
"WE LEFT EVERYTHING BEHIND--EVEN THOSE WE MOST CHERISHED--
"--SO THAT NEBULOS MIGHT LIVE.
"THAT ZARAK AND HIS DECEPTICON ALLIES PURSUE US ONLY IMPROVES THE CHANCES FOR OUR PEOPLE'S RECOVERY."

AND IF WAR IS OUR FATE THEN LET US WELCOME IT...
...AND DO ALL WE CAN TO WIN IT!


BUT, SIR, I JOINED YOUR CAUSE -- I BINARY BONDED MYSELF TO HIGHBROW--

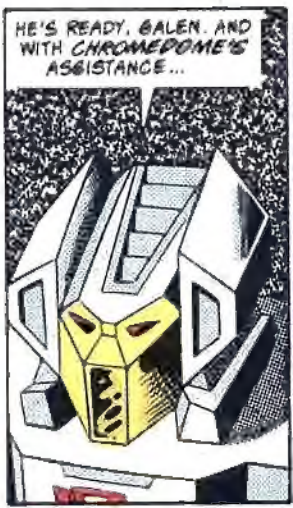

...BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU WERE A MAN OF PEACE.

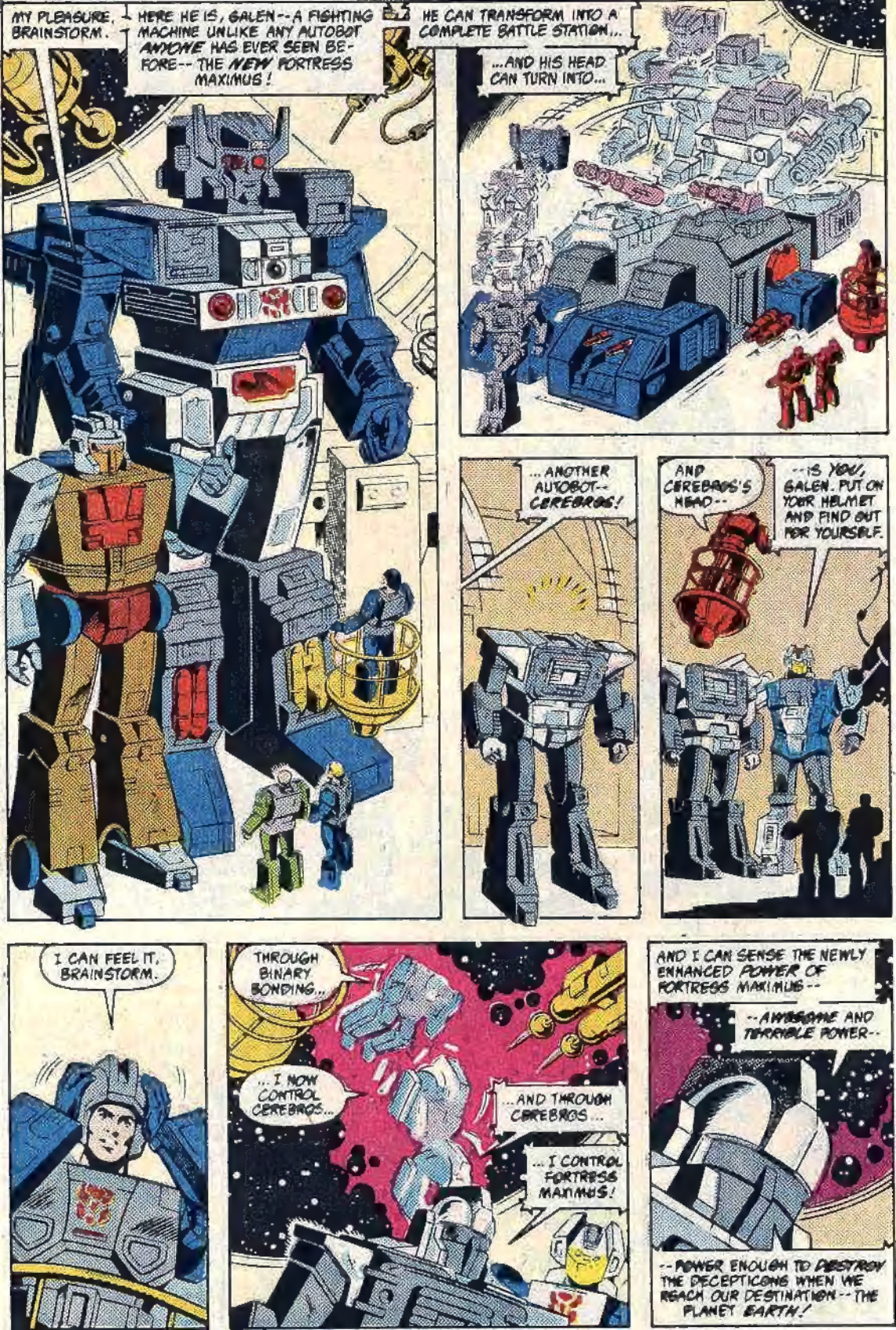

GORT'S POINT IS WELL TAKEN, GALEN.


IN ALL THE YEARS I SERVED AS HEAD OF THE COUNCIL GUARDS, I NEVER HEARD YOU TALK LIKE THIS.
I BINARY BONDED TO HARDHEAD TO HELP INSURE THE SECURITY OF NEBULOS...

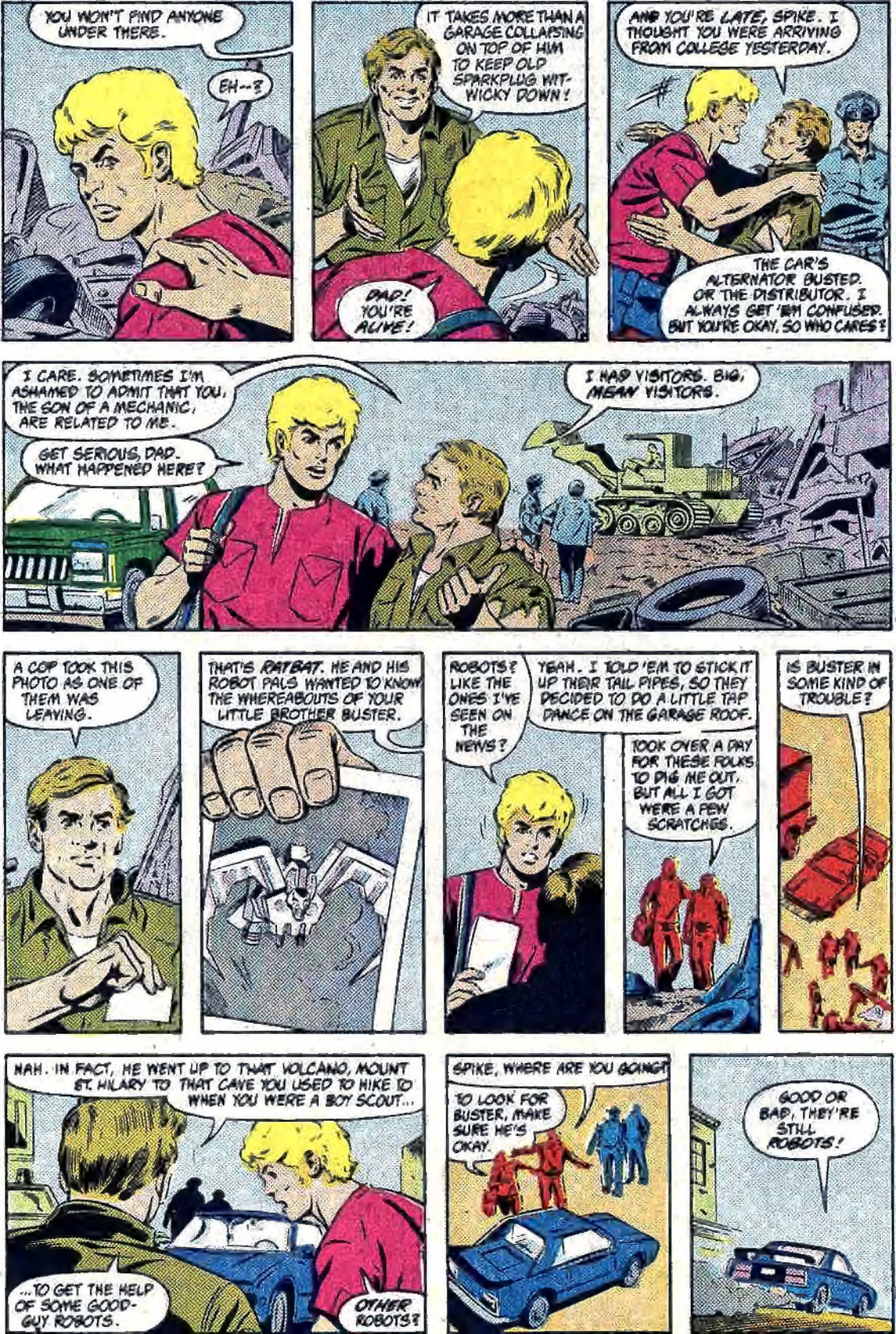
THE FIGHT HAS FOUND US, PYROS, MY FRIEND. NOTHING YOU OR I SAY CAN CHANGE THAT.
THAT'S WHY BRAINSTORM IS DOUBLING THE SIZE AND QUADRUPLING THE FIGHTING POTENTIAL OF FORTRESS MAXIMUS.

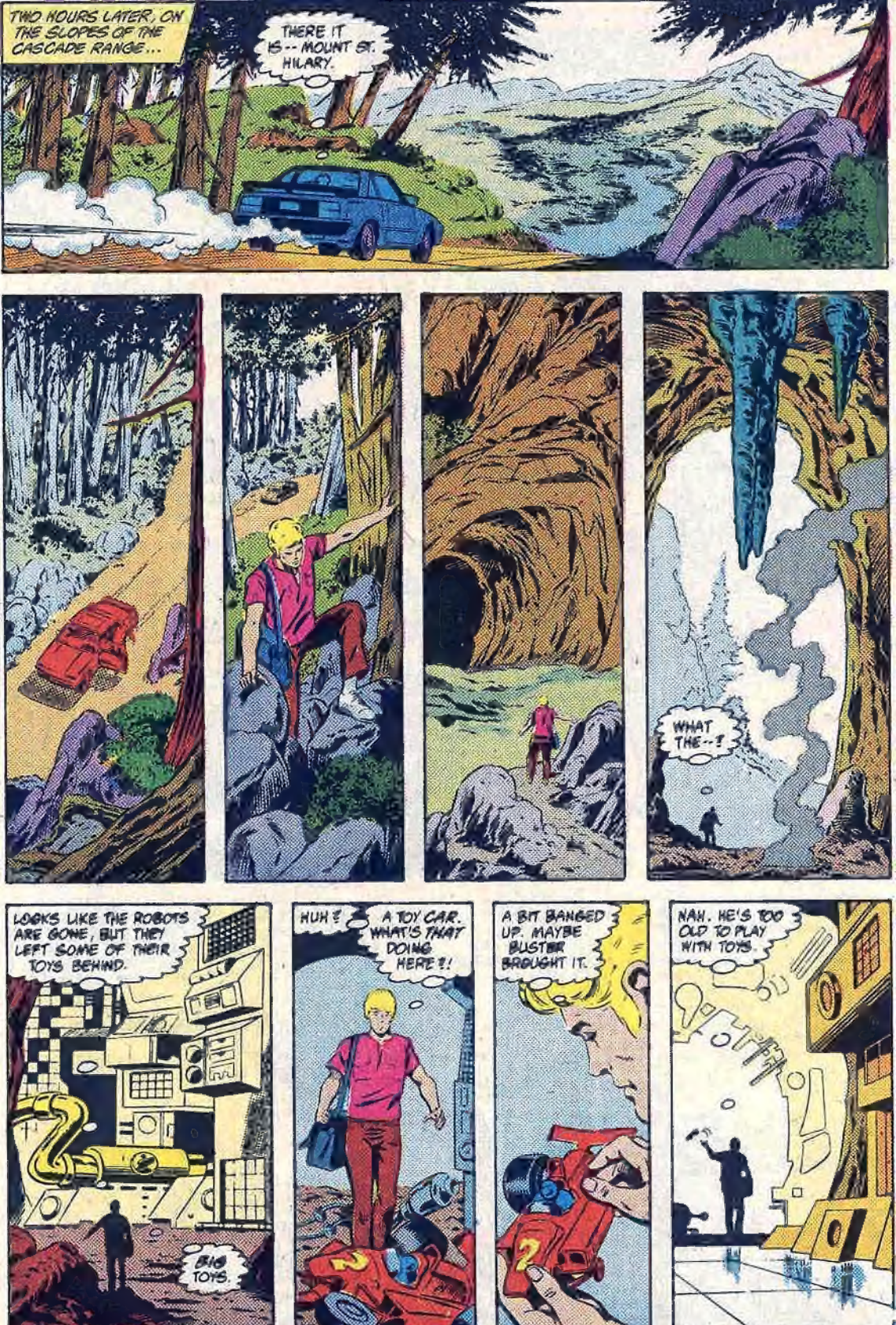
WE MUST USE EVERY ADVANTAGE AT OUR DISPOSAL TO DEFEAT ZARAK AND THE DECEPTICONS.

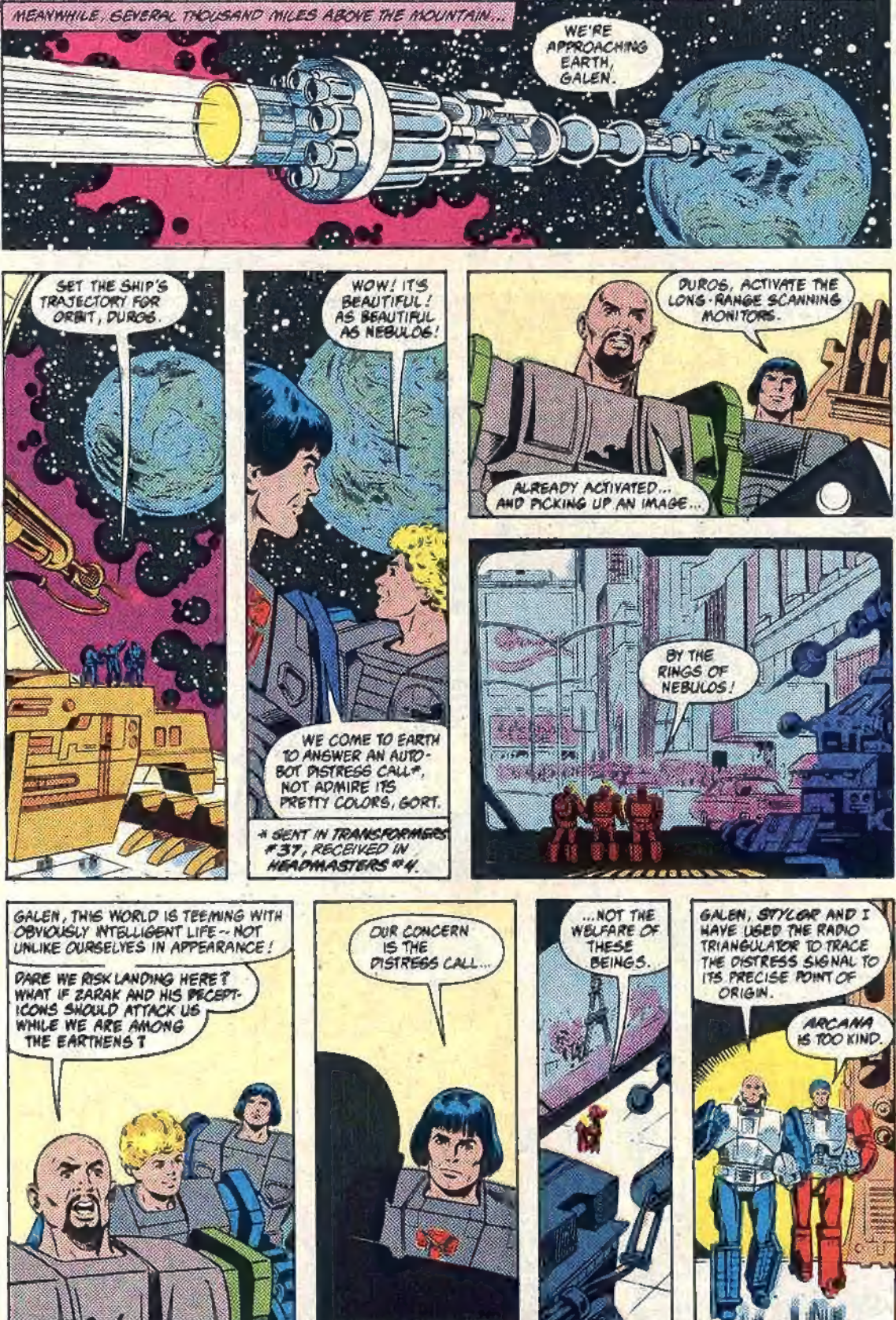

HE'S READY, GALEN. AND WITH CHROMEDOME'S ASSISTANCE...

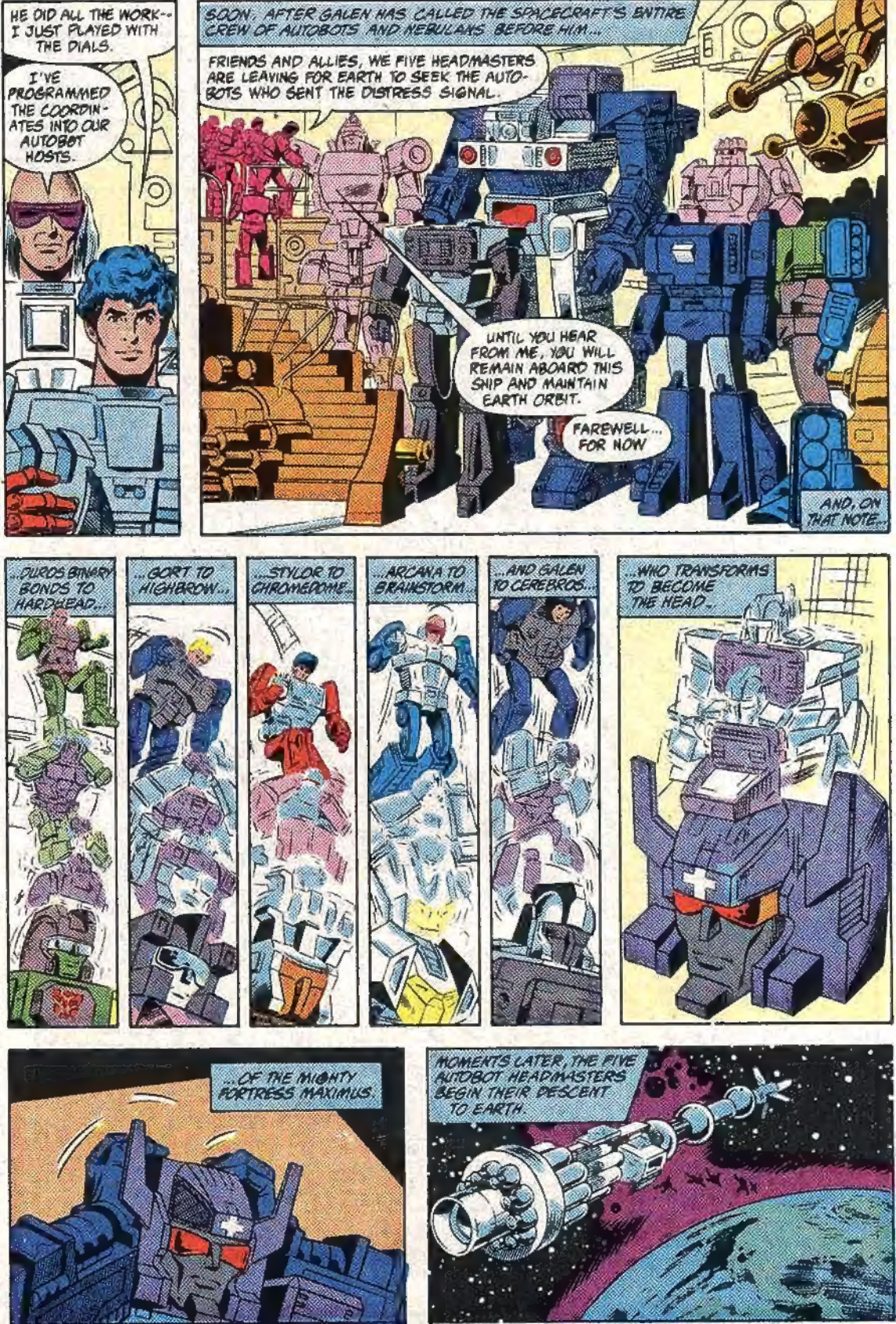

MY PLEASURE, BRAINSTORM.
HERE HE IS, GALEN--A FIGHTING MACHINE UNLIKE ANY AUTOBOT ANYONE HAS EVER SEEN BEFORE--THE NEW FORTRESS MAXIMUS!
HE CAN TRANSFORM INTO A COMPLETE BATTLE STATION...
...AND HIS HEAD CAN TURN INTO...
...ANOTHER AUTOBOT--CEREBROS!
AND CEREBROS'S HEAD--
--IS YOU, GALEN. PUT ON YOUR HELMET AND FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF.
I CAN FEEL IT, BRAINSTORM.
THROUGH BINARY BONDING...
...I NOW CONTROL CEREBROS...
...AND THROUGH CEREBROS...
...I CONTROL FORTRESS MAXIMUS!
AND I CAN SENSE THE NEWLY ENHANCED POWER OF FORTRESS MAXIMUS--
--AWESOME AND TERRIBLE POWER--
--POWER ENOUGH TO DESTROY THE DECEPTICONS WHEN WE REACH OUR DESTINATION--THE PLANET EARTH!

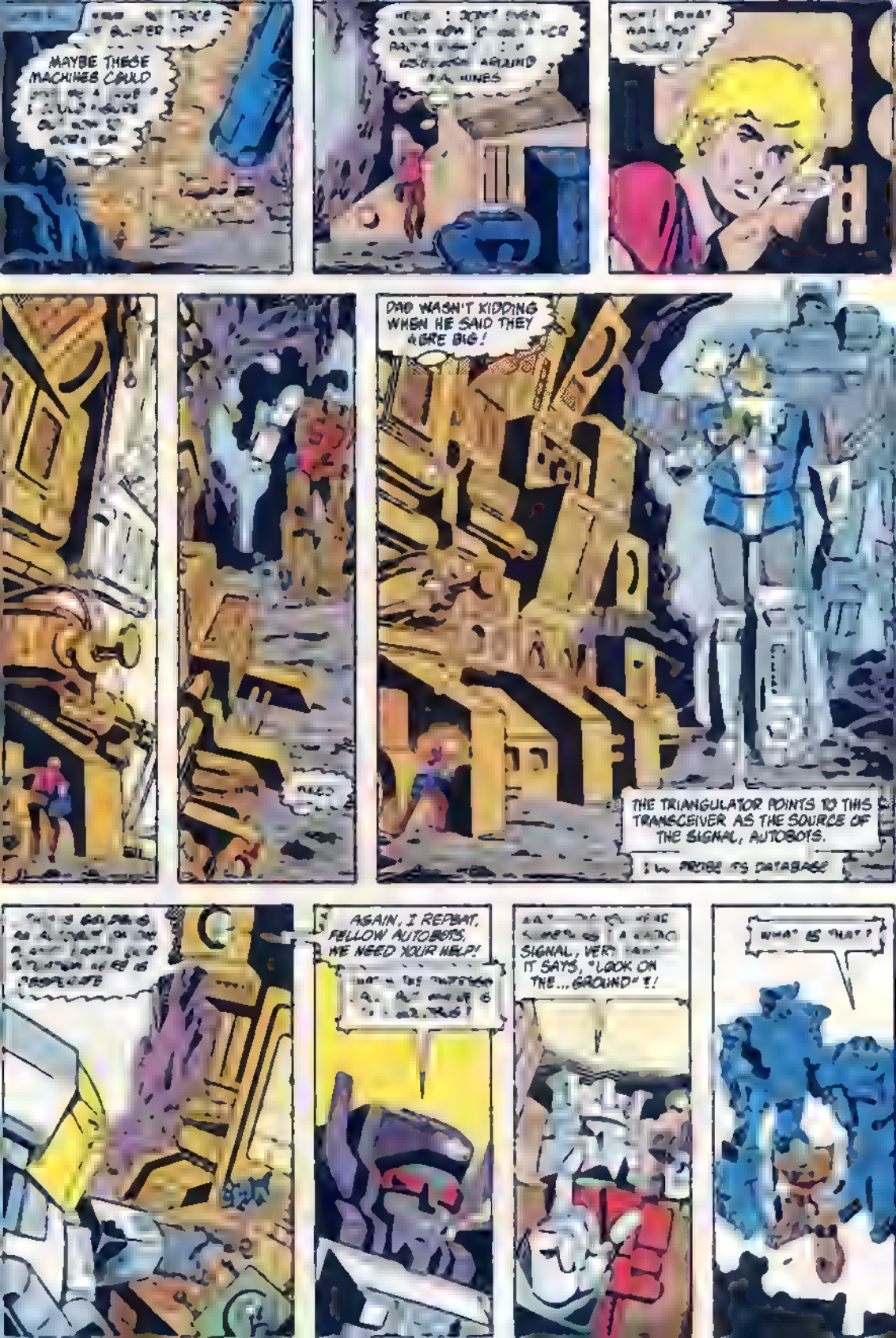
MEANWHILE, ON THE PLANET EARTH...
...AS A SQUADRON OF RAAT* SOLDIERS STANDS GUARD, EMERGENCY WORKERS COMB THROUGH THE WRECKAGE OF WHAT HAD RECENTLY BEEN THE WITWICKY AUTO REPAIR SHOP IN PORTLAND, OREGON...
AMBULANCE
*RAPID ANTI-ROBOT ASSAULT TEAM, A GOVERNMENT AGENCY CHARGED WITH DESTROYING ALL TRANSFORMERS.
...A SITE ATTRACTING AN UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF ATTENTION DUE TO THE VERY UNNATURAL DISASTER THAT MADE IT THIS WAY...
HALT! THIS IS A RESTRICTED AREA!
OH, NO--!
POLICE LINE
HEY, DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME?!
--CAN'T BE--
COME BACK HERE!
DAD!
DAD! WHERE ARE YOU, DAD?!
DAD!

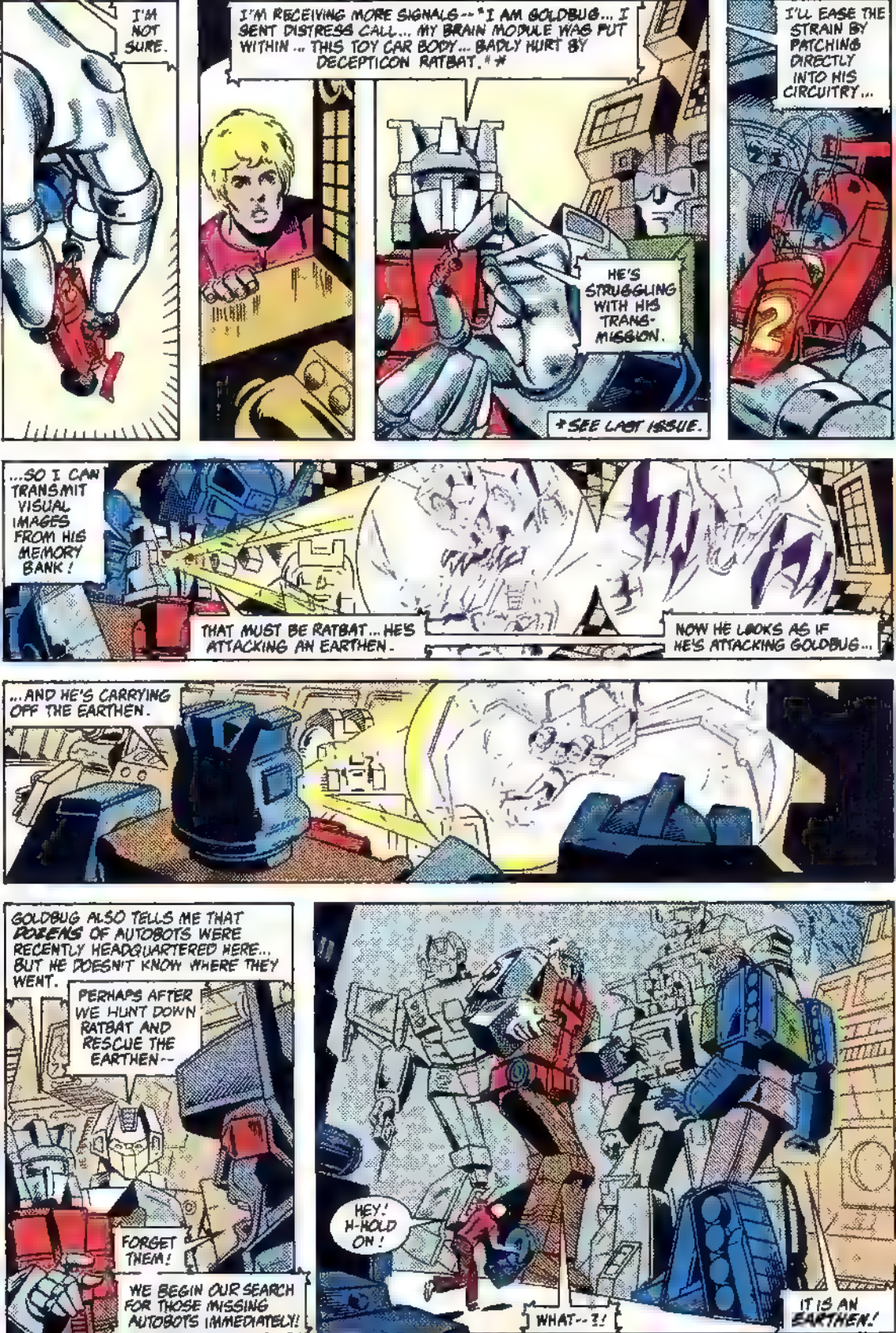

YOU WON'T FIND ANYONE UNDER THERE.
EH--?
IT TAKES MORE THAN A GARAGE COLLAPSING ON TOP OF HIM TO KEEP OLD SPARKPLUG WITWICKY DOWN!
DAD! YOU'RE ALIVE!
AND YOU'RE LATE, SPIKE. I THOUGHT YOU WERE ARRIVING FROM COLLEGE YESTERDAY.
THE CAR'S ALTERNATOR BUSTED. OR THE DISTRIBUTOR. I ALWAYS GET 'EM CONFUSED. BUT YOU'RE OKAY, SO WHO CARES?
I CARE. SOMETIMES I'M ASHAMED TO ADMIT THAT YOU, THE SON OF A MECHANIC, ARE RELATED TO ME.
GET SERIOUS, DAD. WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
I HAD VISITORS. BIG, MEAN VISITORS.
A COP TOOK THIS PHOTO AS ONE OF THEM WAS LEAVING.
THAT'S RATBAT. HE AND HIS ROBOT PALS WANTED TO KNOW THE WHEREABOUTS OF YOUR LITTLE BROTHER BUSTER.
ROBOTS? LIKE THE ONES I'VE SEEN ON THE NEWS?
YEAH. I TOLD 'EM TO STICK IT UP THEIR TAIL PIPES, SO THEY DECIDED TO DO A LITTLE TAP DANCE ON THE GARAGE ROOF.
TOOK OVER A PAY FOR THESE FOLKS TO DIG ME OUT, BUT ALL I GOT WERE A FEW SCRATCHES.
IS BUSTER IN SOME KIND OF TROUBLE?
NAH. IN FACT, HE WENT UP TO THAT VOLCANO, MOUNT ST. HILARY TO THAT CAVE YOU USED TO HIKE TO WHEN YOU WERE A BOY SCOUT...
...TO GET THE HELP OF SOME GOOD-GUY ROBOTS.
OTHER ROBOTS?
SPIKE, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO LOOK FOR BUSTER, MAKE SURE HE'S OKAY.
GOOD OR BAD, THEY'RE STILL ROBOTS!


TWO HOURS LATER, ON THE SLOPES OF THE CASCADE RANGE...
THERE IT IS-- MOUNT ST. HILARY.
WHAT THE--?
LOOKS LIKE THE ROBOTS ARE GONE, BUT THEY LEFT SOME OF THEIR TOYS BEHIND.
BIG TOYS.
HUH?
A TOY CAR. WHAT'S THAT DOING HERE?!
A BIT BANGED UP. MAYBE BUSTER BROUGHT IT.
NAH. HE'S TOO OLD TO PLAY WITH TOYS.


MEANWHILE, SEVERAL THOUSAND MILES ABOVE THE MOUNTAIN...
WE'RE APPROACHING EARTH, GALEN.
SET THE SHIP'S TRAJECTORY FOR ORBIT, DUROS.
WOW! IT'S BEAUTIFUL! AS BEAUTIFUL AS NEBULOS!
WE COME TO EARTH TO ANSWER AN AUTO-BOT DISTRESS CALL*, NOT ADMIRE ITS PRETTY COLORS, GORT.
* SENT IN TRANSFORMERS #37, RECEIVED IN HEADMASTERS #4.
DUROS, ACTIVATE THE LONG-RANGE SCANNING MONITORS.
ALREADY ACTIVATED... AND PICKING UP AN IMAGE...
BY THE RINGS OF NEBULOS!
GALEN, THIS WORLD IS TEEMING WITH OBVIOUSLY INTELLIGENT LIFE -- NOT UNLIKE OURSELVES IN APPEARANCE!
DARE WE RISK LANDING HERE? WHAT IF ZARAK AND HIS DECEPTICONS SHOULD ATTACK US WHILE WE ARE AMONG THE EARTHENS?
OUR CONCERN IS THE DISTRESS CALL...
...NOT THE WELFARE OF THESE BEINGS.
GALEN, STYLOR AND I HAVE USED THE RADIO TRIANGULATOR TO TRACE THE DISTRESS SIGNAL TO ITS PRECISE POINT OF ORIGIN.
ARCANA IS TOO KIND.

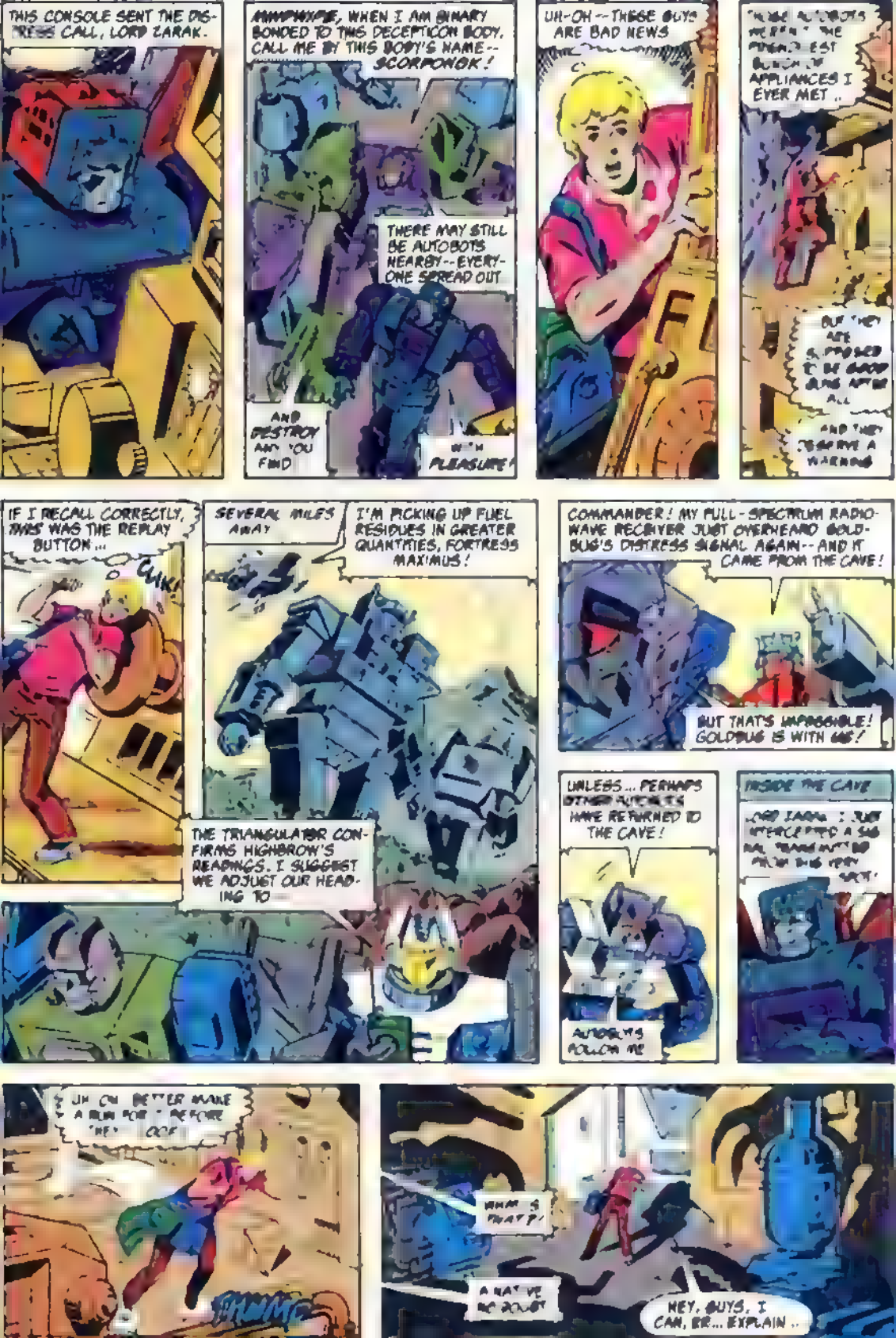

HE DID ALL THE WORK-- I JUST PLAYED WITH THE DIALS.
I'VE PROGRAMMED THE COORDINATES INTO OUR AUTOBOT HOSTS.
SOON, AFTER GALEN HAS CALLED THE SPACECRAFT'S ENTIRE CREW OF AUTOBOTS AND NEBULANS BEFORE HIM...
FRIENDS AND ALLIES, WE FIVE HEADMASTERS ARE LEAVING FOR EARTH TO SEEK THE AUTOBOTS WHO SENT THE DISTRESS SIGNAL.
UNTIL YOU HEAR FROM ME, YOU WILL REMAIN ABOARD THIS SHIP AND MAINTAIN EARTH ORBIT.
FAREWELL... FOR NOW
AND, ON THAT NOTE...
...DUROS BINARY BONDS TO HARDHEAD...
...GORT TO HIGHBROW...
...STYLOR TO CHROMEDOME...
...ARCANA TO BRAINSTORM...
...AND GALEN TO CEREBROS...
...WHO TRANSFORMS TO BECOME THE HEAD...
...OF THE MIGHTY FORTRESS MAXIMUS.
MOMENTS LATER, THE FIVE AUTOBOT HEADMASTERS BEGIN THEIR DESCENT TO EARTH.

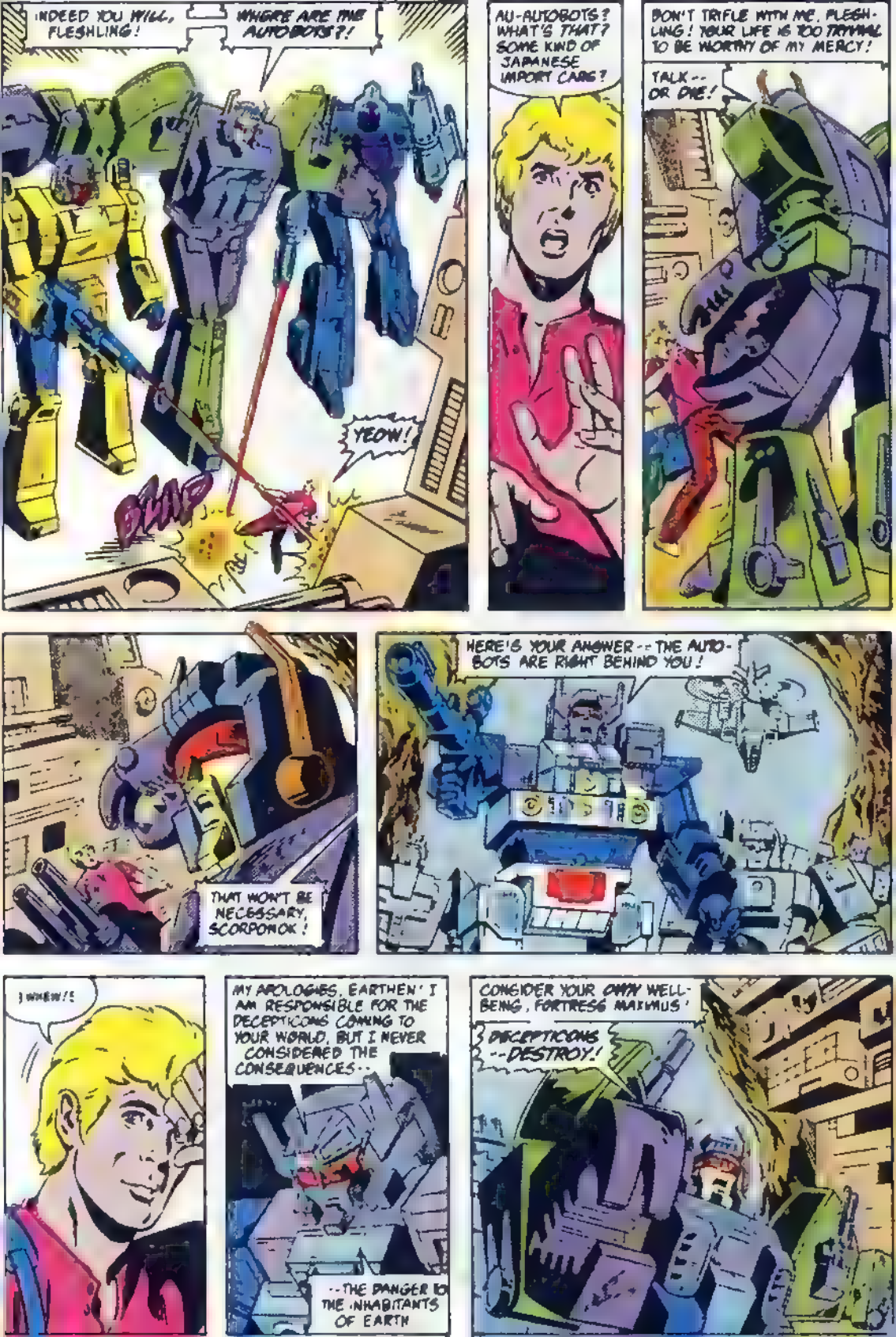

MAYBE THESE MACHINES COULD
NOW! WHAT WAS THAT SOUND?
DAD WASN'T KIDDING WHEN HE SAID THEY WERE BIG!
THE TRIANGULATOR POINTS TO THIS TRANSCEIVER AS THE SOURCE OF THE SIGNAL, AUTOBOTS.
AGAIN, I REPEAT, FELLOW AUTOBOTS, WE NEED YOUR HELP!
SIGNAL, VERY
IT SAYS, "LOOK ON THE... GROUND"!
WHAT IS THAT?

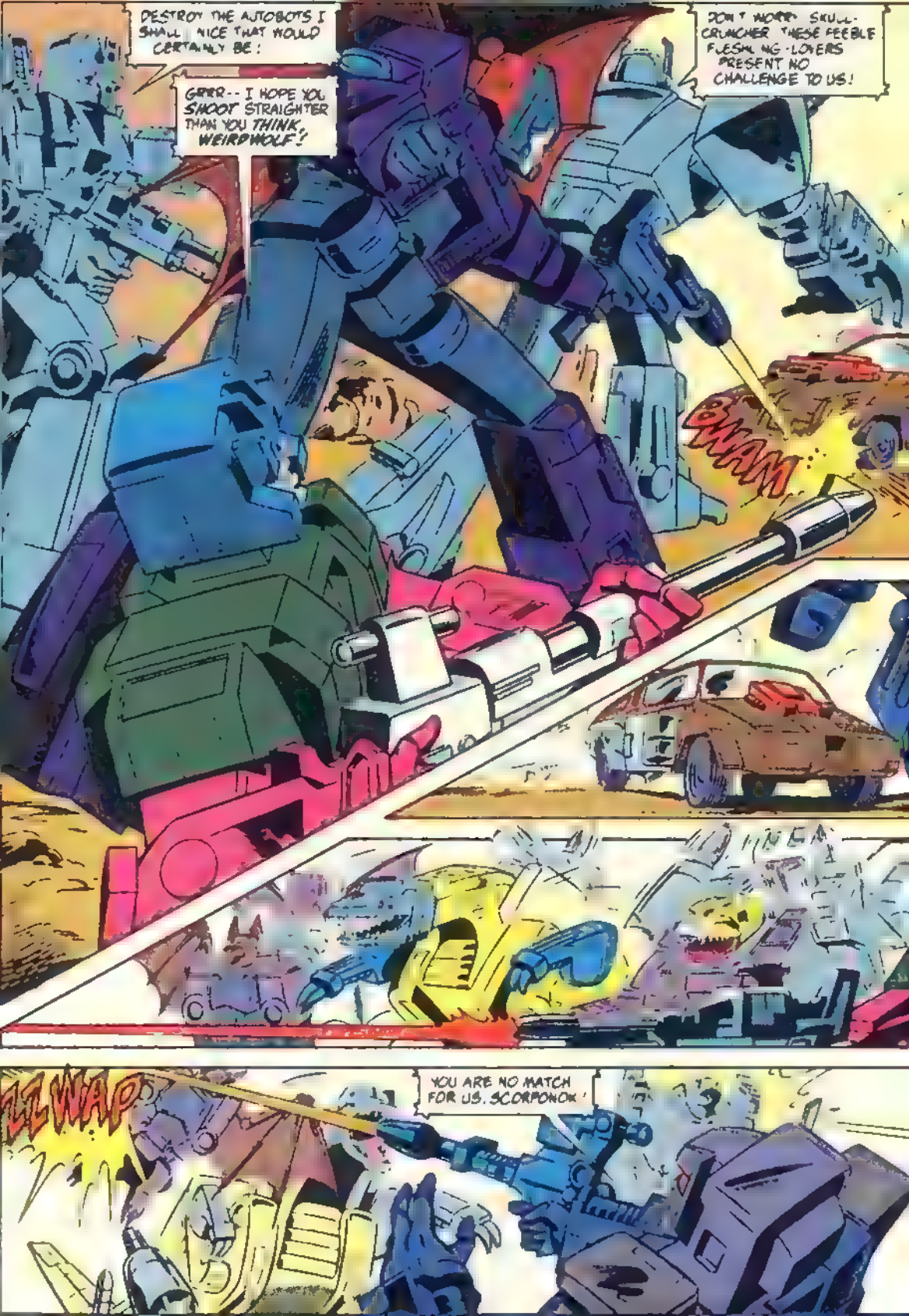

I'M NOT SURE.
I'M RECEIVING MORE SIGNALS--"I AM GOLDBUG... I SENT DISTRESS CALL... MY BRAIN MODULE WAS PUT WITHIN... THIS TOY CAR BODY... BADLY HURT BY DECEPTICON RATBAT." *
HE'S STRUGGLING WITH HIS TRANS-MISSION.
* SEE LAST ISSUE.
I'LL EASE THE STRAIN BY PATCHING DIRECTLY INTO HIS CIRCUITRY...
...SO I CAN TRANSMIT VISUAL IMAGES FROM HIS MEMORY BANK!
THAT MUST BE RATBAT... HE'S ATTACKING AN EARTHEN.
NOW HE LOOKS AS IF HE'S ATTACKING GOLDBUG...
...AND HE'S CARRYING OFF THE EARTHEN.
GOLDBUG ALSO TELLS ME THAT DOZENS OF AUTOBOTS WERE RECENTLY HEADQUARTERED HERE... BUT HE DOESN'T KNOW WHERE THEY WENT.
PERHAPS AFTER WE HUNT DOWN RATBAT AND RESCUE THE EARTHEN--
FORGET THEM!
WE BEGIN OUR SEARCH FOR THOSE MISSING AUTOBOTS IMMEDIATELY!
HEY! H-HOLD ON!
WHAT--?!
IT IS AN EARTHEN!

I--I KNOW I'M TAKING A BIG CHANCE HERE-- HECK, WITH ONE STEP YOU COULD BE SCRAPING ME OFF YOUR SIZE 40 SHOE-- BUT MY BROTHER THOUGHT AUTOBOTS WERE GOOD GUYS!
ME WAS THE ONE CAPTURED BY RATBAT!
GOOD GUYS JUST DON'T LET BAD GUYS GET AWAY WITH STUFF LIKE THAT!
IT'S AGAINST THE RULES!
EARTHEN, THESE "RULES" YOU CITE HAVE NO BEARING ON US
BUT RATBAT IS A DECEPTICON, OUR SWORN ENEMY, AND--
WE CAME HERE TO HELP AUTOBOTS, HARDHEAD! NEITHER RATBAT NOR HIS CAPTIVE QUALIFIES ON THAT COUNT!
MY FIRST IMPRESSION OF YOU WAS RIGHT. YOU'RE JUST A BUNCH OF COLD, LIFELESS MACHINES!
ON THE CONTRARY, EARTHEN ..
I AM AS WARM-BLOODED
...AND AS ALIVE..
AS YOU.
WE ARE MORE ALIKE THAN YOU SUSPECTED.
BUT YOUR PROBLEM PRE-CEDED OUR ARRIVAL.
I FEEL SYMPATHY FOR YOUR SITUATION .
..BUT NO RESPONSIBILITY
MAYBE WE'RE NOT AS ALIKE AS YOU THINK! IF YOU WERE A HUMAN, YOU'D WANT TO HELP!
THE LIVES OF MANY ARE DEPEND-ENT ON THE SUCCESS OF OUR MISSION
I CANNOT JEOPARDIZE THAT SUCCESS FOR THE LIFE OF ONE.
GALEN, THE TRIANGULATOR HAS FOUND TRACES OF ROCKET EXHAUST.
THIS COULD LEAD US TO THE AUTOBOTS.
MOMENTS LATER, AFTER GALEN AND CEREBROS HAVE RECOMBINED WITH FORTRESS MAXIMUS ..
HEY, WAIT-- YOU CAN'T JUST LEAVE ME HERE ..
...ALONE...

HOURS LATER AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY
THE VERY FABRIC OF SPACE RIPS OPEN TO DISGORGE A SECOND SPACECRAFT--
ONE WHOSE PURPOSE IS FAR MORE SINISTER THAN ITS PREDECESSOR
WE'RE LEAVING WARP SPEED, SIR. BEFORE US LIES OUR DESTINATION
THAT FLYSPECK! THAT MUDBALL IS EARTH?!
YES LORD ZARAK
THE NAVIGATIONAL COMPUTERS PINPOINT THIS WORLD AS THE ORIGIN OF THE AUTOBOT DISTRESS SIGNAL.
THE ACCURACY FACTOR IS--
SPARE ME THE TECH TALK, VORATH!
IF THAT'S WHERE THE SIGNAL COMES FROM THEN THE AUTOBOTS CAN'T BE FAR AWAY
KRUNK, PREPARE THE DECEPTICON HEADMASTERS FOR BINARY BONDING AND DEPARTURE
YES SIR.
ELSEWHERE
GETTIN LIGHT OUT MUST BE CLOSE TO SUNRISE
START LOOKIN' FOR BUSTER AGAIN.
- WHAT WAS THAT NOISE?
THE AUTOBOTS-- THEY'VE RETUR-
-THOSE GUYS AREN'T THE AUTOBOTS!
THEY DON'T EVEN LOOK AS NICE AS THE AUTOBOTS
AND THE AUTOBOTS DON'T EXACTLY REMIND ME OF SANTA CLAUS
BETTER W DE
SEE WHAT THEY'RE UP TO


THIS CONSOLE SENT THE DISTRESS CALL, LORD ZARAK.
AHHHHH!, WHEN I AM BINARY BONDED TO THIS DECEPTICON BODY, CALL ME BY THIS BODY'S NAME-- SCORPONOK!
THERE MAY STILL BE AUTOBOTS NEARBY--EVERYONE SPREAD OUT
AND DESTROY ANY YOU FIND
WITH PLEASURE!
UH-OH--THESE GUYS ARE BAD NEWS
THESE AUTOBOTS WERE THE DIMMEST BUNCH OF APPLIANCES I EVER MET..
BUT THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO BE GOOD GUYS AFTER ALL
AND THEY DESERVE A WARNING
IF I RECALL CORRECTLY, THIS WAS THE REPLAY BUTTON...
CLUNK!
SEVERAL MILES AWAY
I'M PICKING UP FUEL RESIDUES IN GREATER QUANTITIES, FORTRESS MAXIMUS!
THE TRIANGULATOR CONFIRMS HIGHBROW'S READINGS. I SUGGEST WE ADJUST OUR HEADING TO
COMMANDER! MY FULL-SPECTRUM RADIO-WAVE RECEIVER JUST OVERHEARD GOLDBUG'S DISTRESS SIGNAL AGAIN--AND IT CAME FROM THE CAVE!
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! GOLDBUG IS WITH ME!
UNLESS... PERHAPS OTHER AUTOBOTS HAVE RETURNED TO THE CAVE!
AUTOBOTS FOLLOW ME
INSIDE THE CAVE
UH OH BETTER MAKE A RUN FOR IT BEFORE THEY COME
THUMP
WHAM'S THAT?!
A NATIVE NO DOUBT
HEY, GUYS, I CAN, ER... EXPLAIN..


INDEED YOU WILL, FLESHLING!
WHERE ARE THE AUTOBOTS?!
YEOW!
BUMP
AU-AUTOBOTS? WHAT'S THAT? SOME KIND OF JAPANESE IMPORT CARS?
DON'T TRIFLE WITH ME, FLESHLING! YOUR LIFE IS TOO TRIVIAL TO BE WORTHY OF MY MERCY!
TALK -- OR DIE!
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, SCORPONOK!
HERE'S YOUR ANSWER -- THE AUTOBOTS ARE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
WHEW!!
MY APOLOGIES, EARTHEN! I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DECEPTICONS COMING TO YOUR WORLD, BUT I NEVER CONSIDERED THE CONSEQUENCES--
--THE DANGER IS THE INHABITANTS OF EARTH
CONSIDER YOUR OWN WELL-BEING, FORTRESS MAXIMUS!
DECEPTICONS --DESTROY!


DESTROY THE AUTOBOTS I SHALL NICE THAT WOULD CERTAINLY BE!
GRRR-- I HOPE YOU SHOOT STRAIGHTER THAN YOU THINK, WEIRDWOLF!
DON'T WORRY SKULL-CRUNCHER THESE FEEBLE FLESHLING-LOVERS PRESENT NO CHALLENGE TO US!
BWAM
YOU ARE NO MATCH FOR US, SCORPONOK!
LLWAP

AN EMPTY BOAST, SCORPINOK. AUTOBOTS TRANSFORM...
...AND ROLL OUT!
IN QUICK SUCCESS ON THE AUTOBOTS CHANGE TO THEIR VEHICLE MODES
AS THEIR HEADS CONVERT TO THEIR VEHICLE PARTNERS AND TAKE CONTROL FROM WITHIN
BUT THE DECEPTICONS QUICKLY MATCH THE AUTOBOTS MOVE
DECEPTICONS TRANSFORM!
YOU AND YOUR EVIL CREW HAVE CROSSED HALF A GALAXY ONLY TO FIND DEFEAT!
KABOOM

GRR-- FORTRESS MAXIMUS IS A LOT BIGGER AND STRONGER THAN I REMEMBER HIM, SCORPONOK!
HE IS BUT ONE, SKULLCRUNCHER! YOU AND WEIRDWOLF-- TRANSFORM AND SMASH HIM! I'LL DEAL WITH THESE OTHERS!
GRR-- MY PLEASURE, COMMANDER!
HIS ARMORED HIDE RIP IT TO SCRAP I SHALL!
THE AUTOBOTS LOOK LIKE THEY'RE WINNING..
..BUT I'M NOT HANGING AROUND FOR THE FINAL SCORE!
BEST I HIDE TILL THIS GAME IS OVER!
STOP HIM! STOP FORTRESS MAXIMUS!
OUR WEAPONS AREN'T MAKING A DENT IN HIM, COMMANDER!
MINDWIPE IS RIGHT!
BUT THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO SEIZE THE ADVANTAGE..
...EH? THAT CLOTH -- COULD THAT BE THE ANSWER?
SCORPONOK-- WHY IS HE LEAVING THE BATTLE?
GETTING HOTTER-- THIS TUNNEL I TOOK MUST BE LEADING TO THIS VOLCANO'S CORE!
YEAH, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT
BUT AT LEAST NO ONE'S LIKELY TO FIND ME--
--HERE, FLESHLING?
SCORPONOK!
I BELIEVE I HAVE SOMETHING OF YOURS.

KEEP THE BLANKET!
YOU MIS-UNDERSTAND ME, DEAR BOY...
...I WAS REFERRING TO HAVING...
BWAM
...YOUR MISERABLE LIFE!
SPLOOSH!
NO!
WHAT IS WRONG, BOY? IS THIS MOLTEN MAGMA TOO HOT FOR YOU?
OR PERHAPS YOU'RE ANNOYED AT BEING TOYED WITH--
--MUCH AS I WAS WHEN YOU CLAIMED TO KNOW NOTHING OF THE AUTOBOTS...
...THE VERY SAME AUTOBOTS WHOM YOU CALLED HERE FOR HELP!
HSSS
THEY CAN'T HELP YOU NOW, BOY!
THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN, ZARAK!
FORTRESS MAXIMUS!

THAT'S A CUE TO LEAVE IF I EVER HEARD ONE!
...BUT BIGGER ISN'T NECESSARILY BETTER!
YOU MAY BE BIGGER, FORTRESS MAXIMUS...
I'LL NEVER FIT THROUGH THAT PASSAGE!
BUT MY HEAD WILL-- AFTER IT TRANS-FORMS...
...TO CEREBROS!
YOU CANNOT ESCAPE, BOY! WITH YOU IN MY GRASP, NO AUTOBOT WOULD DARE ATTACK ME!
HE'S NOT IN YOUR GRASP YET, ZARAK!
WHO ARE YOU?!
BWAM
YOUR DESTROYER!
I WON'T MAKE IT ACROSS HERE ALIVE IF SCORP KEEPS KNOCKING DOWN THE ROOF!
THAT ROCK BRIDGE LOOKS TOO FRAGILE FOR SCORPONOK TO CROSS...
...BUT NOT FOR...
...LORD ZARAK!
SPIKE IS TRAPPED...UNLESS...

...I GET TO HIM FIRST!
OOF!
GALEN!
SURRENDER, ZARAK!
ONE CHANCE... --A RADIO COMMAND TO SCORPONOK--
--BLAST THE CEILING ABOVE THE BOY!
HELP!
I'LL SAVE YOU, SPIKE--
--UNGHH!!
HA HA! THE FOOL! WITHOUT HIM, FORTRESS MAXIMUS IS HELPLESS...
...AND THE AUTOBOTS ARE DOOMED!
GALEN! YOU--YOU SACRIFICED YOURSELF FOR ME...AFTER ABANDONING ME EARLIER!
WHY?
I REALIZED... ALLOWING ONE INNOCENT FARTHEN TO DIE... BECAUSE OF OUR ARRIVAL... WOULD VIOLATE... ALL WE STAND FOR.
I COULD NOT ...LET THAT... HAPPEN.
SAVE YOURSELF, SPIKE.
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?

TAKE MY HELMET... SO I WILL NOT DIE... IN VAIN.
OUTSIDE...
FALL, AUTOBOTS!
ZAP
POW
FALL BEFORE THE MERCILESS MECHANICAL MIGHT OF THE DECEPTICONS!
I PREFER TO STAND.
FORTRESS MAXIMUS! BUT HOW--?! GALEN IS--
DEAD, ZARAK? MAYBE BUT WITH HIS HELMET, I CONTROL FORTRESS MAXIMUS NOW.
AND I'M THROUGH TOYING WITH YOU!
WE CAN'T BEAT HIM!
DECEPTICONS RETREAT!
I DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA FOR US TO HANG AROUND EITHER, AUTOBOTS. THIS VOLCANO IS GOING TO...
BLOW!
SCOW
THAT IS A FAREWELL TRULY WORTHY OF OUR LOST LEADER.
AGREED, HIGHBROW.
...AND PERHAPS A FITTING WELCOME TO OUR NEW ONE.
ME? ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...ME?!
THE END.

NEXT ISSUE ⟩ SHOCKWAVE BATTLES FORTRESS MAXIMUS IN A CONFLICT TO END ALL CONFLICTS!!!